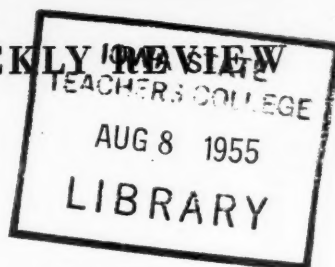


# America

August 13, 1955  
Vol. 93 Number 20

NATIONAL CATHOLIC WEEKLY REVIEW



## First session of the 84th: an estimate

BENJAMIN L. MASSE

## Niels Stensen: bishop and scientist

RICHARD M. BRACKETT

## Get-rich-quick lure of "condensed books"

HAROLD C. GARDINER

### Editorial opinion

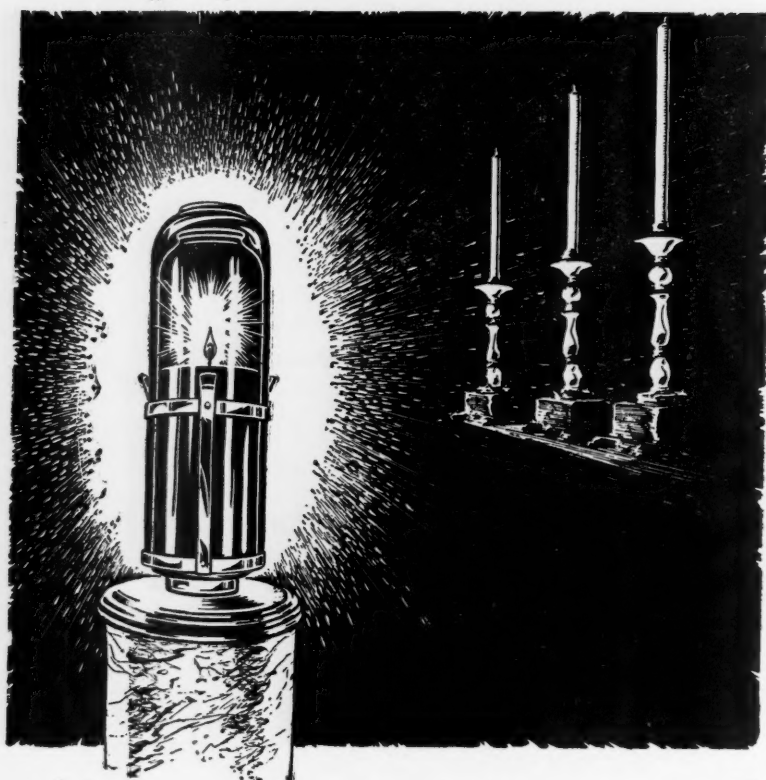
Chou's formula for "peace"

On the frontier of space

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## CONTENTS

*America, August 13, 1955*

Current Comment ..... 461  
Washington Front. Charles Lucey 464  
Underscorings ..... C. K. 464

Editorials ..... 465  
A further look at Geneva  
Bhoodan Yagna and the Catholics  
of India  
"Lost battalion" of teachers?

### Articles

First session of the 84th:  
an estimate ..... 467  
Benjamin L. Masse  
Niels Stensen: bishop and scientist 469  
Richard M. Brackett  
Feature "X": Catholics ignorant  
of the faith ..... 471  
Clayton C. Barbeau

Literature and Arts ..... 472  
Get-rich quick lure of  
"condensed books"  
Harold C. Gardiner  
The First Communion (poem) ... 474  
James F. Cotter

Books ..... Reviewed by  
The Oppression of Protestants in  
Spain ..... 474  
Francis E. McMahon  
Officers and Gentlemen ..... 475  
Harold C. Gardiner

Grandfather Stories ..... 475  
Riley Hughes  
Fundamentals of Government ... 476  
Patricia Barrett

The Great American Heritage:  
The story of the five  
Eisenhower brothers ..... 476  
John J. O'Connor  
William Lloyd Garrison and the  
Humanitarian Reformers ..... 477  
William L. Lucey  
Sociological Theory: Its Nature  
and Growth ..... 477  
Theodore Abel  
Sorcerers' Village ..... 478  
Fortunata Caliri

The Word. Vincent P. McCorry, S.J. 478

Films ..... Moira Walsh 479

Correspondence ..... 480

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### ***Chou's formula for "peace"***

The release of the 11 American airmen held in China on charges of espionage should not lead us to expect too much of the U. S.-Red China conference begun Aug. 1 at Geneva. The sudden Red move, announced on the opening day of the meetings, may be the prelude to the freeing of the 40 additional Americans, civilians and other military personnel, believed illegally held. Yet, were the entire repatriation issue resolved to our satisfaction, there would remain other questions seeking urgent answer before the diplomats could hope to "ease Far Eastern tensions." We find it hard to agree with Senator George, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, that Red China's Premier Chou En-lai sounded "conciliatory" on these questions in his clever July 30 speech, so obviously timed for the opening of the new round of Geneva meetings. Chou's formula for "peace" in the Far East has been heard before. According to him, one requisite is the withdrawal of U. S. armed forces from the Formosa area. Another is the scrapping of the Seato agreement and the mutual-security treaties we have signed with Japan, Korea and the Philippines. For these Chou would substitute an Asian "pact of collective peace." In other words, we can ease tensions in the Far East if we renege on our commitments, leave our Asian allies to their own devices and give Red China a free hand. "Conciliatory" is hardly the word to describe this latest venture of Chou's into the realm of oratory. It sounds more like a brazen demand for complete surrender.

### ***Indian report on Russia***

If the Kremlin really has the welcome mat out for foreigners, the Communists might just as well drop their ridiculous pretense that everything in the Soviet Union is fine and dandy, and that Russia leads the world in everything from dominos to dynamos. They might just as well make up their minds also not to be so hypersensitive to honest criticism. What generated these observations was the reaction of a group of Indian farm experts to a conducted tour of the Soviet Union. The Indians found that the discredited "big carrot-big stick" philosophy of early capitalism is the reigning policy in the Workers' Wonderland. For workers who engage in the type of speed-up known euphemistically as "Socialist emulation," there are many juicy rewards. For those who don't, for the "inefficient and the insubordinate," there are penalties ranging from small fines to slave-labor camps. The Indian experts noted that this system of rewards and punishments has resulted in high output but has also led to deterioration in quality. The visitors were impressed, too, by the great inequalities in Soviet living standards. Incidentally, their report has not yet been made public in India. The U. S. public knows about it through the journalistic enterprise of A. M. Rosenthal, a foreign correspondent of the New York Times. Yet this is the kind of information about Russia which the Indian people could profitably use.

## **CURRENT COMMENT**

### ***Fight for Belgian schools continues***

Belgian Catholics are girding themselves for a new phase in a struggle that has been to their honor for over a century. On July 21 the present Socialist-Liberal coalition Government was able to complete legislative action on the school-reform bill. On that day the Senate voted approval by 91 to 0, the unanimity being possible because the Christian Social party members left the Senate in protest before the voting took place. The Belgian hierarchy, under the leadership of Joseph Cardinal van Roey, Archbishop of Malines, has now called upon the faithful to "put everything in motion" to change this blatantly anti-clerical law. Undiscouraged by the failure of their earlier bitter protests, the Belgian Catholics will yet be heard from. If history gives any indication, they have a fair chance of winning out in the end. The new legislation tightens state control over the Government-subsidized religious schools and reduces by an estimated \$10 million the amount of financial help allotted to them. Behind these changes the Catholics see an effort by the Socialists and Liberals to establish the principle of state monopoly of education. They see a further ulterior motive of destroying religious influences in public life. Belgium's Catholics will allow neither attempt to go unchallenged.

### ***Another Catholic press organ kidnapped***

American Catholics can imagine the perils of a situation in which a so-called "Catholic press" is in reality outside the direction of the legitimate Church authorities and serves, instead, as a medium of infiltration by Communists. This has happened on a wholesale scale in Poland, where diocesan weeklies, popular monthlies and now even a scientific quarterly have been "kidnaped" by the pro-Red "progressive Catholics." The latest addition is *Polonia Sacra*, a review of theological and philosophical questions. Founded in 1918 and enjoying an excellent reputation, this organ reappeared after the war but vanished from the scene in 1953. It has now bobbed up again under the auspices of Pax, the Government-supported publishing house of the pro-Red Catholics, whose own weekly, *Today and Tomorrow*, was recently condemned by the Holy Office. *Polonia Sacra* had been criticized in the Communist press for "neglecting" the tasks facing "progressive, enlightened Catholicism." Presumably



the new editors will endeavor to use their acquisition to inculcate, on the theoretical level, the progressist principles condemned by the Holy Office. This formerly distinguished quarterly will thus promote, in another field, the same work of confusion, diversion and infiltration now carried on through the other kidnaped Catholic organs. There is today no real Catholic press in Poland.

### **Gas bill stalls in the Senate**

To avoid a protracted floor fight that could easily have kept the members in Washington another week, the Democratic leadership in the Senate agreed to postpone action on the House-approved Harris bill until the next session. The Harris bill, called after its sponsor, Rep. Oren Harris of Arkansas, would exempt producers of natural gas from the jurisdiction of the Federal Power Commission. The vote in the House on this hotly disputed issue came the night of July 29 and was close all the way. The decisive factor was probably an extraordinary appeal by Speaker Sam Rayburn of Texas. His words in favor of the bill appeared, however, to carry more conviction on the Republican than on the Democratic side of the chamber. Of the 209 votes for the Harris bill, Republicans cast 123 and Democrats only 86. No less than 136 Democrats voted to continue Federal regulation of the independent gas producers. They were joined by 67 consumer-conscious Republicans. And this, as one observer wrote in amazement, "was supposed to be a Democratic bill." Two-fifths of the Democratic vote for the Harris bill came from representatives of three big gas-producing States—Texas, Oklahoma and Louisiana. In the final analysis, the well-financed oil and gas lobby bested the many mayors and governors from the north who intervened in behalf of consumers.

### **Refugee problem kicked around**

Can or can't the United States handle the 214,000 refugees eligible under the present refugee program to enter this country by the end of 1956? On July 12 the largest mass movement under the present setup was successfully completed when 1,215 refugees—712 of them assisted by the Catholic Relief Services of the

NCWC—landed in New York for dispersal to homes and jobs in 30 States. Nine other such contingents are expected to arrive before the end of this year. This speed-up has been called a "shot in the arm" to the movement. But on July 29 a House subcommittee headed by Rep. Francis E. Walter urged the creation of an international refugee agency that would strive to find more homes for Europe's refugees "elsewhere than in the United States." It was a mistake to think, the subcommittee declared, that the United States could increase its present absorption of refugees. On April 27, however, President Eisenhower had declared in a press conference that he was all in favor of liberalizing the present refugee law, and on August 2, the Secretary of State told representatives of the governors of 35 States, gathered to weigh revision of the law, that he was all in favor of the 214,000 goal. The confusion is obvious. Perhaps what needs to be taken more to heart is a resolution passed by the International Catholic Migration Commission, meeting in Rio de Janeiro on July 25, on the "importance of informing people of the religious, moral, social and economic values of well-organized migration"—values, we might add, which accrue not only to the refugees, but to the host country as well.

### **TV, parents and children**

A popular columnist reports that TV circles in Manhattan were buzzing last week over Msgr. Edwin B. Broderick's brochure *TV and Your Child* (Paulist Press. 10 cents). First director of radio and TV for the Archdiocese of New York, consultant to networks and producer of many programs, including "The Week in Religion" and "Life Is Worth Living," Msgr. Broderick writes from a rich background. He starts with the statistically established facts that children are the "most ardent viewers" of TV, the "most impressed" by it, the "least equipped to cope with it" and the "least provided for by it." Among his conclusions are these: there is need for more suitable programs for children; parents must be more vigilant about their children's viewing habits. This last statement finds corroboration in a recent study made at Cincinnati's Xavier University. It was discovered that an "appalling percentage" of parents—52 per cent—fail to exercise any supervision over their children's viewing habits. This is the same percentage that showed up in a similar study four years ago at the same university. The children's own viewing habits are improving, the study shows. Their devotion is shifting from western movies to Disneyland, for example, but parents are as indifferent as ever. *TV and Your Children* will help to de-lethargize parents.

### **Surgeons cut too deep**

An explosive medical issue burst into print with the July issue of *GP*, the official monthly organ of the American Academy of General Practice. The bombshell was a report by the general-practitioners' association scoring the excessively high fees charged by

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surgeons compared to the much smaller fees that go to the family doctor. "After making a diagnosis, arranging for hospital admission and perhaps an ambulance," the report complains, "the [family] doctor must turn his patient over to a surgeon who then charges \$150 for the 15 or 20 minutes required to remove an appendix." It is not pleasant to see this open wrangle among doctors over fees. The GP's seem convinced, however, that they will get nowhere without invoking the pressures of an awakened public opinion. And they have a point. The financial rewards and professional prestige of the GP are so low that fewer and fewer of the better medical graduates are going into general practice. The forthright *New England Journal of Medicine*, editorializing in its Aug. 12, 1954 issue on the theme of the "Vanishing American," declared:

The fundamental role of the family medical adviser in providing the basic medical needs of a family and community has long been recognized and emphasized. If, however, the general practitioner is in danger of becoming obsolete—in other words, if his role is diminishing to that of a supernumerary or "walk-on"—perhaps the time has come for more than lip service.

Edward J. McCormick, M.D., past president of the American Medical Association, has said that if the GP is "the backbone of American medicine," something had better be done for him before we have a spineless medical profession on our hands.

#### **Lutheran heresy trial**

The first heresy trial in the 20-year history of the Northwest Synod of the United Lutheran Church of America was held July 29. Rev. George Crist Jr. was found guilty of heresy by a seven-member trial committee of the synod. Heresy trials immediately evoke in the popular mind pictures of Joan of Arc, of thought-control and other griefs. Yet if a religious body holds certain definite beliefs, it seems only reasonable that persons like ministers, who officially represent that body, should be held accountable for openly denying them. In this particular instance the pastor of Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Durham, Wis., was found guilty of denying not only certain specifically Lutheran principles, but also certain doctrines that are as fundamental to Catholics as to Lutherans, such as the Virgin birth of the Saviour, the validity of some of His miracles, His Transfiguration, His physical Resurrection and Ascension. The synod's action, in other words, was a firm profession of Christian faith in the face of very probable storms of criticism. The proceedings, moreover, appear to have been conducted with scrupulous fairness and a real spirit of charity, as well as with dignity on the part of the persistently recusant defendant. His behavior during the trial won commendation from the trial committee. The committee proposed that the 31-year-old pastor and his family be given adequate financial support until the final settlement of his status. We join them in prayer that Christ's truth may prevail.

#### **ON THE FRONTIER OF SPACE**

When the first man-made satellite of earth swings into its orbit some time in 1957-58 and commences its 90-minute circuit of the globe, an era in human technology will have ended. This satellite and its sisters will be the last of the earthbound travelers. Their successors will be able to cast off the leading strings and jump out into space.

The White House announcement on July 29 that U. S. scientists were planning to construct a "small, unmanned earth-circling satellite vehicle" to be used for scientific observations recalled the other great announcement ten years ago: the atom-bombing of Hiroshima. Both announcements have confronted man with immense opportunities linked with immense dangers. Even as the men with the stars in their eyes were rejoicing, the military analysts were murmuring about intercontinental ballistic missiles. And voices in Congress were asking questions about sharing with Russia the scientific data gleaned by the satellite. Let us take a look at the situation.

The satellite project is part of the U. S. contribution to the International Geophysical Year (IGY), 1957-58. This is an intensive, cooperative year-long study by the scientists of 40 nations of all the physical aspects of the earth (Am. 7/30, p. 424). Construction of the satellite was suggested last October by the Special Committee for IGY, meeting at Rome. Scientific work on the satellite will be sponsored by the National Science Foundation and the National Academy of Sciences. The U. S. Department of Defense will cooperate to the extent of providing rocket power to put the satellite into its orbit at the requisite speed.

The satellite, about the size of a basketball, will travel at 18,000 miles an hour around its orbit, 200 to 300 miles above the earth. Most probably it will have inside it instruments that will broadcast their recordings back to earth. During the few days of its flight, before it drops down into the dense atmosphere and disappears in a flash of flame, it will transmit priceless data on radiation, the extent of the atmosphere, etc. Telescopic observation of its flight will help to refine calculations of latitude and longitude.

The White House announced that it proposed to tell all 40 IGY nations the radio frequency to be employed in the transmitting instruments as well as the exact orbital path of the satellite. Since some of the information transmitted could be turned to military use, the question arises: shall we give these data to Russia also, since Russia is taking part in IGY? The primary purpose of the satellite is, as I said, to furnish scientific data for the studies of the International Geophysical Year. A great part of the effectiveness of an operation like IGY lies precisely in the pooling of data obtained by a multitude of observers. It is hard to see how one can take part in a cooperative project like IGY and not observe the ground rules. If we expect other countries to transmit their observations to us, they will expect us to share our findings with them.

C.K.

## WASHINGTON FRONT

Veterans said you had to go back thirty years to the 1920's and Calvin Coolidge to find a session as dull as the just-ended first half of the 84th Congress. Crisis and spectacle and emergency, to which this capital has so long been attuned, were missing, and sensible men thanked God. But somehow the calm and quiet didn't signify constructive achievement, for though some measures of substance were passed, there were some fairly important and deserving ones that fell among thorns.

Altogether the whole legislative experience for the seven months did not add up to the almost unrelieved disaster foreseen by President Eisenhower last fall when he pleaded for election of a Republican Congress as a means of averting a paralyzing political cold war. At the end, Vice President Richard M. Nixon and Democratic Leader Sen. Lyndon Johnson all but had their arms about each other singing, naturally, "He's a Jolly Good Fellow."

The Administration came off well enough on foreign affairs, where it got its chief support from the Democrats, but it seemed hard to give it much more than a draw on domestic matters. Qualitatively its failure to get a school-aid bill owing to a row on the segregation issue, a health reinsurance bill, a highway program, the Upper Colorado program and other measures made an impressive list of also-rans.

But in winning a new military-reserve program, though not quite all that he sought, Mr. Eisenhower drew a basic new line in maintenance of a trained fighting force. He got just about what he sought in terms of a military budget after a Democratic drive for larger funds sputtered out. He got a minimum-wage bill with a dollar-an-hour floor instead of 90 cents and without the broadened coverage he asked. He defeated Democratic tax-cut attempts. And in the end he got an omnibus housing bill not far from what he sought.

That the Administration fared so well in overseas affairs rests largely with Georgia's Walter F. George, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The 77-year old Southern conservative was the stand-out personality of the session, a figure of strength like Taft and Vandenberg in other postwar years. The White House drew richly from this strength in the reciprocal-trade act extension, the new foreign-aid bill, ratification of the Paris pact, the Seato pact and a number of treaties.

There was enough left over for plenty of controversy in the new session beginning in January—moves to cut taxes, the highway and health-insurance programs and others. Then there will be much sharper infighting with the incentive of an election and votes to be won in 1956.

CHARLES LUCEY

## UNDERSCORINGS

The Department of the Army announced on July 27 that henceforth each soldier may have the name of his particular religious denomination stamped on his identification tag. The Navy and Air Force are expected to adopt the same practice soon. Hitherto, Army "dog tags" were stamped "C" (Catholic), "P" (Protestant), "J" (Jewish), "X" (all other denominations) or "Y" (no preference). Orthodox Greeks protested this practice. The change was made at the instance of Maj. Gen. (Msgr.) Patrick H. Ryan, Army chief of chaplains.

► The National Federation of Catholic College Students will hold its twelfth national congress at the Hotel William Penn, Pittsburgh, Aug. 30-Sept. 4. Most Rev. James A. McNulty, Bishop of Paterson, N. J., NFCCS national moderator, will speak on the congress' theme: "The Federation in the Work of the Church" (Miss Valerie Anne Price, executive secretary, 1312 Massachusetts Ave., N. W., Washington 5, D. C.)

► The Grail Resident Adult Education Program, a series of residential courses for the young Catholic student or working girl, will be conducted in Philadelphia between Sept. 23, 1955 and May 20, 1956. The program is geared toward living a more meaningful Christian life, contributing to the lay apostolate in the Church today. Contact Miss Anne Mulkeen, Grail Center, 4520 Chester Avenue, Philadelphia 43, Pa. (EVergreen 2-5873).

► Mrs. Alfred M. Barrett of New York City, 75-year-old mother of two priests and four nuns, was awarded on July 28 the annual citation of Fordham University's Institute on Religious and Sacerdotal Vocations. Her eldest son, Rev. Alfred J. Barrett, S.J., writer and retreat master, spoke on "Vocations and a Mother." He is at present stationed at Fordham. Mrs. Barrett's other children in religious life are Rev. Paul Aquinas Barrett, O. P., Air Force chaplain in Korea; Sister Teresa of Jesus, a Discalced Carmelite in Saranac, N. Y.; and Sisters Marie Bellarmine, Mary Aloysius and Mary Martin of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Brooklyn.

► An unusual and edifying career came to an end when Rev. Ivan Kologrivof, 64, professor at the Oriental Institute in Rome, died on July 7 in the Eternal City. Scion of an old Russian family, after his graduation from the aristocratic Alexander Lyceum in St. Petersburg he became in 1912 an officer in the famous Imperial Bodyguard hussars. After the revolution he became a Catholic and then a priest. The last of his many writings was *Sanctity in Russia*, the outgrowth of his lectures at the Oriental Institute. He was a Jesuit for 34 years, one of a small number of Russian Jesuits.

C. K.

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## A further look at Geneva

Even if the Bulgarians, with typical Communist scorn for human life and the elementary decencies of civilization, had not shot down an Israeli airliner on July 27, with the loss of 58 lives, a reaction would have set in to the mood of relief and incipient hope which followed the Geneva meeting at the summit. Throughout the postwar period, the Communists have revealed—fortunately for us—a fatal inability to support their peace propaganda campaigns with appropriate actions. So it was that the rape of Czechoslovakia, the Berlin blockade and the invasion of South Korea served as harsh, if unintended, reminders to the free world that Communist tactics change but never Communist goals. After Geneva, as before, despite all the smiling and handshaking, Moscow and Peiping are still bent on enslaving the world, peacefully, by subversion, if possible, but by war and devastation if necessary.

In an address on July 28 to the American Club in Paris, New York's Gov. Averell Harriman observed that at Geneva the Soviet leaders had gained what they sought, a relaxation of tensions, "without giving away a single thing." Though he conceded that the meeting had not been without profit, since it gave the Communists a chance to see the unity of the West in operation, he warned against any relaxation of the free world's defense effort. As one who has had personal experience of negotiating with the Soviet leaders, Mr. Harriman knows whereof he speaks.

The same day in Washington Sen. William F. Knowland addressed the Senate in similar vein. The Republican minority leader agreed with the President that the Geneva meeting had been a success, but only in an "exploratory" sense. He reminded the Senate that "all the basic problems remain in Europe and Asia." On the gains to be expected from any anticipated raising of the Iron Curtain, from increased travel and exchange of information between the Communist and the free worlds, he differed sharply with Mr. Eisenhower. He recalled that there had been a great deal of going and coming between Nazi Germany and this country during the 1930's, as well as trade with Japan, and that these exchanges had not prevented World War II.

To the growing chorus of voices warning a world too eager, perhaps, to hope for the best from Geneva, Hanson Baldwin, the New York *Times* military expert, added his contribution on July 31. Writing in the *Times* on that day, he warned that despite "a global impression that the world situation . . . has changed," the "basic power situation in Europe has not improved." If anything, said Mr. Baldwin, it has deteriorated since the Soviets launched their "sweetness and light" campaign. The Communists are still entrenched in the center of Europe. They still control the approaches to Western Europe. They still vastly outnumber Western forces. Only our foreign air bases and our nuclear stockpile neutralize Soviet power. They are our trump card, says Mr. Baldwin, and in

## EDITORIALS

future negotiations we must at all costs avoid letting it go cheaply.

As the President said on returning from Geneva, we must continue to hope, but there is a difference between hoping and wishful thinking. The wishful thinkers among us might ponder the following line of reasoning:

In seeking a relaxation of tensions, the Soviet leaders are either sincere or they are not.

If they are not, it would be the most dangerous kind of folly for us to weaken our alliances and relax our defense effort.

If they are sincere, then they seek a lessening of tensions because our rearmament and the forging of Nato have forced them to pull in their horns. In that event it would be equally stupid of us to change our present course.

If the wishful thinkers imagine there exists still another, and a more hopeful possibility, beyond a miracle of God's grace, the editors of this Review do not know what it is. And of a miracle of God's grace, bringing about a transformation in the Kremlin, they see no evidence whatsoever.

## Bhoodan Yagna and the Catholics of India

Almost two years ago this Review took note with approval of a unique experiment in land reform which has fired the enthusiasm of the people of India (10/13/53, p. 113). At that time Acharya Vinobha Bhave, a disciple of Mahatma Gandhi, had secured as gifts two million acres of land from India's wealthy landowners and distributed them to the country's landless poor. Bhoodan Yagna, or "land gift sacrifice," as the movement has become known, was off to an auspicious start.

Since then the Hindu holy man has persuaded the wealthy of India to donate another two million acres. The sum total of land given up by landowners, though large, is a far cry from the goal set by Bhave, who hopes to distribute 50 million acres to the needy by 1957. The impact of the movement on India, however, is not to be measured solely by the amount of land the poor have received since Bhoodan Yagna started. It is rather the spirit of love behind the enterprise which has produced the deep effect in the minds of the poor and taught them that class struggle is not the only alternative to their hapless state.

Such a movement could not but present a challenge



to the Catholics of India. As the *Examiner*, century-old Catholic review published in Bombay, recently noted:

Acharya Vinobha Bhave . . . is a profoundly religious man, utterly opposed to class warfare and convinced that the social and economic problem cannot be solved except in terms of love inspired by a religious ideal. Whatever other reserves we may have to make about him from the standpoint of Catholic doctrine, we must recognize that he is with the Christians in the ideal of cooperation among the classes and in opposing the leveling down of all classes by violence.

Catholics, therefore, in the opinion of the *Examiner*, need not hold themselves aloof from Bhoodan Yagna merely on the ground that it is Hindu-inspired.

The dangers lurking in Bhoodan Yagna stem from the uncertainties in Bhave's doctrine on private property. He holds that land, like air and water, belongs to all the people. This is true only in the broad sense. Land belongs to all until labor by the individual, or some other just title, turns it into private property. Only when private property, through abuses of one sort or another, defeats God's purpose in creating material things, does redistribution become morally permissible and even necessary.

Another dangerous element in Bhoodan Yagna is the extent to which certain Indian Socialists are using the movement to threaten the landowners of India. Yet force and the threat of force defeat the Acharya's main purpose, which is to solve India's land problem in the spirit of love and mutual understanding.

These are not difficulties which should restrain India's Catholics from entering into the spirit of Bhoodan Yagna. As the *Examiner* points out:

Catholics, with their clear ideas of the claims of justice and the role of charity, are best fitted to keep this movement within the bounds of reasonableness and fairness.

Certainly they cannot remain indifferent to an enterprise which, in essence, is in accord with the spirit of the gospel and papal social teachings.

### **"Lost battalion" of teachers**

The TV program "Life Begins at Eighty" featured a stunt on its July 31 show that was considerably more than a stunt. The program's ordinary routine was interrupted to bring before the cameras some twenty men and women, every one over eighty, who are still holding down full-time jobs. The small parade—of doctors, ministers, doormen, beauty-shop managers, advertising agents and many more—was designed to convince the viewer that fourscore years is not necessarily a barrier to happy and productive employment.

By a striking coincidence, the press carried on the same day an extended notice of a campaign "to improve the lot of the emeritus professor by using his talents and giving him a moral and economic lift in his retirement." One might have thought that the directors of the campaign had seen the "Life Begins at

Eighty" show and were taking the opportunity of drawing the obvious conclusion: if one can be a successful salesman or grocer or clerk after eighty, why cannot a professor continue to teach fruitfully after the retirement age most colleges and universities rather arbitrarily set down?

What is the plight of the retired professor? According to a survey now being conducted at the University of California, there are some 7,000 emeriti professors in the country. Some are receiving as little as \$35 a month in their retirement. The average retirement pay of 1,361 professors who answered a recent poll was \$184 a month. Their average age was 74 and their average years of teaching 34. In 1952, even at the wealthy University of California (the Los Angeles campus), where a retirement fund of \$25 million had accumulated over the years, emeriti professors were receiving only \$109 a month.

These revelations shocked the regents of the California institution, and retirement salaries have since been substantially increased. Many institutions, however, cannot afford to follow suit, and so the current campaign is two-pronged: to assure either adequate retirement pay, or the continuance of academic work beyond the retirement age, which is generally 68 or 70. Compulsory retirement, it is felt, is wasting a "great reservoir of mature wisdom and teaching ability . . . and a holy, just, American discontent [needs to be created] over this 'lost battalion.'"

The problems are many, of course. The financial rub is the biggest one. But there is also the matter of having to make place on faculties for the coming young professors. It is obvious that many a time the older man must go if the younger is to advance in a teaching career. But if the older man must make room, it must not be by forced retirement into relative pauperism.

This large social problem is not passing unnoticed or uncared-for by the policymakers of Catholic education. The development of retirement funds is progressively engaging the attention of administrators. Five years ago relatively few Catholic institutions did much about it, but that policy, or rather lack of policy, is happily a thing of the past.

One instance of a practical approach to the matter of both retirement funds and the continuing employment of teachers after the retirement age is the recently formed College Teachers' Placement Bureau of the National Catholic Educational Association. Much remains to be done, but it is surely a happy augury for the future that the Catholic educational system in this country is vitally cognizant of a problem which plagues even richly-endowed secular institutions.

If one were looking around for a worthy cause to which to leave a bequest or give a contribution, nothing, it strikes us, could be worthier than to come to the assistance of those devoted men and women who, after long years of teaching, face the future with uncertainty.

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# First session of the 84th: an estimate

Benjamin L. Masse

ANY ATTEMPT at this time to estimate the worth of the 84th Congress must be tentative. After all, the life of the 84th is only half over. A good many matters which the legislators left hanging in the air when they fled the heat of Washington last week will no doubt be absolved on their return in January. True, some of these matters, like the highway and school construction programs, deal with urgent needs that in a more perfect setup would not have been postponed. But the legislative process in a democracy is not a perfect lawmaking mechanism. Generally halting and cumbersome in its operations, its products usually lack the spit and polish of authoritarian decrees. One of the prices we pay for our liberties is that among us progress comes only as a fruit of compromise, and the art of compromise is neither notably expeditious nor clean-cut.

That helps to explain why verdicts on the work of Congress tend to differ so widely. To many people the members of the 84th are, for instance, deserving of high praise because they adjourned without widening the coverage of the Fair Labor Standards Act, or without liberalizing the Refugee Relief Act.

Yet, other citizens, among them many social-minded Catholics, consider these omissions to be plain derelictions of legislative duty. The fact is that all the social, economic and regional conflicts which divide the American people are more or less faithfully reflected in Congress. By moving slowly and cautiously, trading a little here for a little there, Congress blunts the sharp edge of our conflicts of interest and keeps us a workably united people.

## POSITIVE ACHIEVEMENTS

With these reservations in mind, this writer is inclined to give the 84th Congress a fairly good mark. Certainly the President's fears, which a majority of the voters did not share in the 1954 elections, that a Democratic Congress would seriously impede the orderly business of government proved largely groundless. Under the smooth, responsible leadership of two Texans, Speaker Sam Rayburn in the House and Majority Leader Lyndon Johnson in the Senate, the Democrats upheld the President's hand on a number of key issues. This was notably so in foreign affairs, where the President enjoyed stronger support from the loyal opposition than from many members of his own party.

One dramatic instance of this was Mr. Rayburn's fight for a three-year renewal of the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act. Though the Act as finally approved

*To the sentimental strains of "On Moonlight Bay" and "Down by the Old Mill Stream" and the haunting harmonies of Rep. Frank Chelf's harmonica, the first session of the 84th Congress passed into history at 12:05 A.M. Aug. 3. It was a Democratic Congress working with a Republican President. Father Masse, an associate editor of AMERICA, analyzes briefly the legislative achievements of the partnership.*

is the weakest version of the famous program which the late Cordell Hull initiated two decades ago, it would have been still less satisfactory if the House Speaker had not thrown all his power and prestige behind the President. Some observers feel, in fact, that if Mr. Eisenhower had matched Mr. Rayburn's effort, Congress could have been persuaded to pass a much less protectionist bill.

On other international issues—the treaty establishing the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (Seato), the pact with Nationalist China, the liquidation of the mess in Vietnam, the Formosa Strait crisis, in which the President was given a blank check, the meeting at the summit—the President knew that he enjoyed the confidence and support of the Democratic leadership. Had it not been for the initiative of Sen. Walter George, powerful chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the Geneva meeting might never have been held, nor could the President have pursued a policy there which, only two years ago, some influential Republicans would likely have stigmatized as appeasement. The truth is that on foreign-policy questions, political as well as economic, Mr. Eisenhower seems closer to the Democrats than to the right wing of his own party.

Even on domestic affairs the relationship between the White House and the Democratic majority on Capitol Hill scarcely resembled the cold war which the President anticipated. Speaker Rayburn and Senator Johnson combined their talents for responsible opposition to give the President a number of his major requests, though, it must be confessed, not always in the exact form suggested.

By and large, appropriation bills were approved with only minor changes. In a few cases, Congress swung the economy ax, but not bluntly or very deeply. A newsworthy exception was the appropriation for the Mutual Assistance Program, for which the President asked \$3.2 billion. In a fit of anger over what might charitably be called careless procedures in the Pentagon, the House hacked \$420 million from direct military aid to our allies. As finally approved the House bill called for only \$2.6 billion all told. In conference the Senate managers were able to restore no more than \$100 million or so. That the final figure was not higher was due not so much to House intransigence, however, as to further evidence of Pentagon fumbling. At the last minute, Secretary of Defense Wilson and his aids "found" \$302 million in funds previously appropriated but not yet obligated. With this sum added to the new appropriation, the Penta-

gon will have for direct military aid nearly all the President deems necessary.

The Senate Democratic leadership successfully resisted a drive by the farm bloc to restore rigid farm price supports at 90 per cent of parity, though House Democrats did succumb to the pressure. Senator Johnson and his colleagues also pleased the President by opposing a tax reduction this year, as well as by refusing to cooperate with the House in amending the Social Security Act. (The House voted Old Age and Survivors benefits to totally disabled workers after age 50, and lowered the age at which women become eligible for OASI benefits from 65 to 62.) The Democrats more than fulfilled the President's request for an increase from 75 to 90 cents an hour in the legal minimum wage. They made it an even dollar, thereby giving a modest wage hike to about 2 million of the 24 million workers covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Congress declined, however, the further Administration request to broaden coverage of the wage-and-hour law. Since the Administration made something less than an all-out fight for broader coverage, it was probably not mortally disappointed when Congress failed to act.

In voting to extend the military draft law, the Democrats were also amenable to the President's wishes. They did balk for a time on the ready-reserves program, but finally gave the White House half a loaf, or even a little more. They remained within the limits prescribed by the President in approving wage increases for Federal employees. Finally, despite small support from Republicans, they approved a housing bill not incompatible enough with White House recommendations for public housing to warrant a veto. The President asked for 35,000 units a year for two years. The new law provides for 45,000 units for one year. It also knocks out a restriction, favored by the President, limiting eligibility for low-income public housing to families displaced by slum-clearance programs. All in all, the 1955 housing bill is a mild victory for public-housing advocates. If on this issue most of the House Republicans were not far to the right of the late Senator Taft, it would have been a more pronounced triumph.

#### DISAPPOINTMENTS

From Mr. Eisenhower's viewpoint, the largest failure of the Democrats was their inability to give him a highway bill. Neither the House nor the Senate was sympathetic to the President's idea of financing badly needed highways by issuing bonds. They objected to the bond scheme, not only because it entailed expensive interest charges, but even more because the debt would not show up as red ink in the budget. The Democrats were understandably in no mood to help the President balance the budget and at the same time gain political benefits from a big Government spending program. The Senate did vote a highway bill, but the plans of the Democratic leadership in

the House to follow suit were upset by unexpectedly strong pressure from self-interested lobbies. The pay-as-you-go highway bill backed by Speaker Rayburn foundered on the rocks of higher taxes voted to finance the program.

The Democrats coupled admission of Alaska as a State with admission of Hawaii and thereby doomed Mr. Eisenhower's hopes for Hawaii. They also rebuffed him on his health reinsurance plan, his Federal aid to school construction program, his proposal to raise postal rates, his recommendations for an atomic-powered peace ship and his plea for removal of inequities in the Walter-McCarran immigration act.

#### INVESTIGATIONS

Nor did Democratic cooperation extend to the investigatory function of Congress. By determined digging, Senator Kefauver finally uncovered some facts about the famous Dixon-Yates contract which the Administration had unwisely tried to suppress. Though no evidence of corruption came to light, the White House emerged from the whole affair with its reputation for intelligence, if not for integrity, somewhat impaired. The same can be said for Air Force Secretary Harold E. Talbott's indiscretions. Mrs. Hobby's handling of the Salk vaccine program and Secretary Benson's security firing of Wolf Ladejinsky also gave the Democrats some legitimate partisan ammunition.

Summing up the session, Earl Mazo wrote in the *New York Herald Tribune* on August 3:

On the whole this congressional session—the first of the Democratic-controlled 84th Congress—gave the Republican President virtually all he requested in foreign policy and national defense fields.

It also approved much of his domestic program, rewrote a bit of it and pigeonholed some, notably the highway, school construction and liberalized immigration and refugee programs.

In her syndicated column for August 2, Doris Fleenor went even further in praise of the 84th. In the light of his experience with the 83rd Congress, the President, she thinks, "fared much better with the Democrats in power on Capitol Hill."

Since 1956 will be a Presidential election year, the second session of the 84th Congress may see the outbreak of the "cold war of partisan politics" which the President predicted for this session. Then again, the Democrats may become so embroiled in fratricidal strife that they will be unable to present a united front against Administration proposals. The split could come on taxes, on amendments to the Social Security Act, on regulation of natural-gas producers. On all these questions, the conservative Democrats, who are mostly Southerners, are more sympathetic to Mr. Eisenhower's philosophy than to that of their liberal colleagues. In fact, looking back at the first session, one is impressed by the success of the Democratic leadership in persuading Northerners and Southerners to pull in the same general direction. Perhaps that was the greatest of its triumphs.

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# Niels Stensen: bishop and scientist

Richard M. Brackett

THE RAPID DEVELOPMENT of the Church in Scandinavia during the past two years, with the creation of dioceses in Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland, has helped to arouse interest in a great 17th-century Danish figure, Bishop Niels Stensen (1638-86). A convert in the 29th year of his short life, he is known not only as a saintly bishop, but as a pioneer in the fields of anatomy, geology and crystallography.

The appearance last January of the first number of the multi-lingual *Stenoniana Catholica*, issued thrice yearly and edited by Rev. Gustav Scherz, C.S.S.R., was a significant step toward advancing the cause of his beatification. The publication (a copy may be obtained by addressing Father Scherz at Hans Bogbinders Allé 2, Copenhagen S, Denmark) is designed to acquaint doctors and scientists with the progress that has been made in furthering Bishop Stensen's cause, particularly in Germany, Holland and Italy. This initial issue contains, among other things, an introductory report on the history of Stensen's cause by Archbishop Wilhelm Berning of Osnabrück, a fine discussion of the importance of the Danish scientist's message for our times by Dr. Albert Niedermeyer of the University of Vienna and an article by Father Scherz commemorating Stensen as "the founder of crystallography."

The name of Niels Stensen came prominently before the world at the solemn festivities in the Basilica of San Lorenzo, Florence, on the Feast of Christ the King, October 25, 1953. On this occasion, scientists from all European countries gathered in Florence to attend the Pontifical Mass offered by Bishop Theodor Suhr, O.S.B., first Bishop of Copenhagen since the Reformation and himself a convert from Evangelical Lutheranism. The occasion marked the solemn translation of the earthly remains of Bishop Stensen from the crypt in the basilica to a side chapel named in his honor. Three days earlier Pope Pius XII had received in special audience at Castel Gandolfo a group of 40 doctors and scientists, led by Bishop Suhr and Father Scherz, editor of the two-volume *Letters of Niels Stensen*, published in 1952 by Herder (Freiburg) and Arnold Busck (Copenhagen).

In his allocution, the Pope paid tribute to Bishop Stensen's career, recalling his merits as a world-renowned scientist (discoverer of the Stenonian duct, so called from the Latin form of his name, *Steno*) and his ardent zeal for the propagation of the faith in the Lutheran regions of North Germany:

Father Brackett, New England Jesuit recently ordained at Weston College, Weston, Mass., has long been interested in the Church in Scandinavia. He translated from the Danish Søren Kierkegaard and Catholicism, by Rev. Heinrich Roos, S.J. (Newman Press, 1954). For AMERICA he wrote "Second spring in Sweden" (3/27/54) and "Norway: Jesuits still not tolerated" (7/3/54).

He combined an unconditional faith in Christ and His Church with a supreme concept of science and scientific activity. His whole life was testimony that knowing and believing are, indeed, not exclusive, and that, instead, they are reciprocally confirmatory, if they are genuine.

## STENSEN THE SCIENTIST

Born in Copenhagen, January 11, 1638, Niels Stensen completed his initial education at the university in that city and went to Amsterdam at the age of 22 to pursue anatomical studies under the famous Thomas Bartholin. It was in Amsterdam that he became known for his discovery of the duct of the parotid gland, the *ductus Stenonianus*. Continuing his studies for four years at the University of Leiden, he carried out extensive research on the function of the lachrymal glands, demonstrated the marvelous and intricate organization of the human body and became the first scientist to establish the fact that the heart is a muscle.

In Paris, he delivered his famous address to the Académie des Sciences, lecturing on the anatomy of the brain. In one of his letters, Stensen tells us that during an anatomical demonstration, within the space of an hour, he was able to disprove the theories of Descartes on the muscles.

It must be remembered that in the early 17th century everyone regarded Descartes' physical tenets as "infallible." This occasion proved how deceived all had been in accepting Descartes' system. Might they not also have been deceived by his "infallible" philosophy, even though some points therein were true? The very principle of doubt, fundamental in Descartes' philosophy, led Stensen to doubt the validity of Cartesianism itself.

The Danish scientist had already been shocked by the many divisions within Lutheranism. The urge to find a Church that "spoke with authority," a Church that was "contemporaneous with Christ," had started him on his search for the true religion. In Amsterdam, as a young student, Stensen "first realized the Protestant division . . . in a city full of various sects and confessions."

In 1666, Niels Stensen went to Florence at the invitation of the Grand Duke Ferdinand II of Tuscany and was appointed anatomist at the hospital of Santa Maria Nuova. It was at this time that he also became interested in geology and wrote dissertations on crystal and glacial formations. His great work in this field, the *Prodromus de solido intra solidum*

*contento*, published in 1669, merited for him the title, "Father of Modern Geology."

In the *Prodromus* he made it clear that the *glossopetrae* ("tongue-stones") were fossil shark teeth, and laid the foundations for the scientific study of the earth's strata and advancements in the science of crystallography. The *Prodromus*, now a classic and a great rarity, is only 76 pages long, but is filled with an enormous amount of material concerning the geological history of the earth. Stensen's scientific discoveries, all completed before he was 30, opened up the new fields of geology, paleontology, stratigraphy and their allied sciences.

Even more remarkable than his scientific achievements, however, was Stensen's conversion to the Catholic Church. In the midst of his great scientific endeavors, he began a serious study of religious problems and read deeply in the Church Fathers, especially Saint Augustine. Yet it was most difficult for him to break with Lutheranism, for this meant breaking with his family and friends in Denmark and Holland. We learn from his letter on his conversion that internal disagreements among the reformers, his acquaintance with good intellectual Catholics and the conviction that true holiness was to be found only in the Catholic Church were the deciding factors in turning him from Lutheranism and leading him to seek baptism on November 2, 1667.

#### STENSEN THE CATHOLIC

The years 1672-1674 Stensen employed as lecturer at the Anatomical Institute in Copenhagen, to which he had been invited at the request of King Christian V. Doctors and scientists gathered to witness Stensen's demonstration of the ingenious texture of the fibres of the human body and the marvelous curves and labyrinths of the ducts. Here he quoted his most famous lines:

*Pulchra quae videntur  
Pulchriora quae intelliguntur  
Longe pulcherrima quae ignorantur.*

"Beautiful are the things seen, more beautiful the things we understand, but by far the most beautiful are the things we do not know."

Always deeply religious, the Danish anatomist never concluded a lecture without an allusion to the all-wise and glorious Creator who so admirably designed the human body. His outlook on life may be gleaned from the following words: "While he [the anatomist] examines created things, he often lifts his eyes to heaven, to praise and honor the Creator's wisdom." The real aim of the anatomist, he thought, was to "raise the audience from the artificial structure of the body to the dignity of the soul, and finally, from

the miracles of body and soul to the Creator, in order to know Him and love Him."

#### BISHOP STENSEN

Life in the northern spiritual wilderness (Denmark had then been a century under Lutheranism) became unbearable to him. Stensen's friends had not readily accepted his conversion to Catholicism and considered it "a betrayal of his native country." He soon longed to return to Italy and his beloved Florence, with its Catholic atmosphere. In a letter to Father Athanasius Kircher, the famous Jesuit mathematician and physicist, Stensen expressed the desire to become a priest, "that even I might be allowed to offer the Immaculate Host to the Eternal Father."

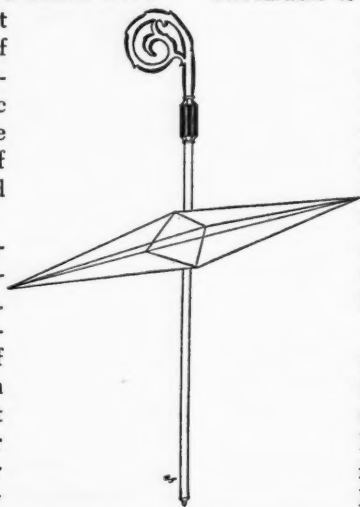
Ordained in 1675 in Florence, he offered his first Mass at the altar of the Santissima Annunziata. Two years later, at the request of the newly converted Duke Johann Friedrich of Hanover for a bishop for his territory, Pope Innocent XI appointed Niels Stensen

Vicar of Northern Germany and Scandinavia. He was consecrated on Sunday, September 19, 1677 by Gregory Cardinal Barberigo, Archbishop of Padua. Significantly enough, the new bishop chose for his coat of arms the symbol of a heart surmounted by a cross.

In the hidden ways of Divine Providence, only nine years were allotted Bishop Stensen before he died in Schwerin, Germany, at the age of 48. Extremely ascetic, he devoted himself entirely to the service of the Church in the northern districts where Lutheranism had gained a strong foothold. From his personal correspondence at this time we gain a sharp insight into the difficulties facing a missionary bishop in the north. Consolations were few as he labored among a handful of Catholics in Hanover, Münster, Paderborn, Halberstadt, Magdeburg and Schwerin. His life was an illustrious example to those of his flock. It was always necessary for them to remember that the Lutherans far outnumbered the Catholics and that the most powerful means of effecting conversions lay in the exemplary lives of the Catholics themselves.

During this period, Bishop Stensen composed the theological works contained in the two-volume edition published in 1941-7 by Knud Larsen and Gustav Scherz. The *Opera Theologica* manifest a profound knowledge of the Fathers of the Church, joined with an intense criticism of Lutheranism, which he was singularly fitted to refute. His sermons, ascetical treatises and apologetical writings give evidence of the saintliness of the convert-bishop. Writing to a friend, the renowned philosopher Gottfried Leibniz, Stensen recalled his anatomical demonstrations that disproved Descartes' theories:

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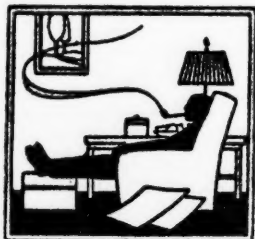
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tions and gradually to receive the love of Christian humility, which, in truth, is the most worthy love of which a rational spirit is capable.

Leibniz, profoundly impressed by Stensen's conversion, was nevertheless somewhat disappointed. Yet, he did not doubt that "a man of such prudence and genius had long considered the matter."

Bishop Stensen also corresponded with another great philosopher and admired friend, Baruch Spinoza. In 1670 Spinoza's *Tractatus theologico-politicus* appeared anonymously in Amsterdam. In his letter to Spinoza on this occasion, Stensen called him "the reformer of the new philosophy" and rebuked him for considering man "as if he were an automaton, destitute of soul." He asked Spinoza to demonstrate how "this intellectual and material being, man, is united; in what manner is the principle of life joined to the body?" "All Cartesian philosophy" he added, "cannot demonstrate to me this one phenomenon." The letter concludes with a plea that Spinoza "turn to the Catholic Church, in which, like another Augustine, you will find security and peace in her infallible truth and will lead thousands, now being misled by your writings, back to the true fold."

## FEATURE "X"



*Mr. Barbeau, a veteran of Korea, is studying at Sacramento Junior College, Sacramento, Calif. He shows how Catholics ignorant of their faith can be a real stumbling block to people outside the Church.*

WHEN MY WIFE, who is a convert, was studying Catholicism, we discovered that practically her whole attitude towards the Church, her whole distrust of it, was based upon erroneous information given her by Catholics.

A Catholic told her that the Immaculate Conception meant that Mary was born of a virgin. A Catholic told her that the Virgin Mary did not die. A Catholic told her that, if you had enough money, you could buy a divorce in the Catholic Church. Again and again, I would hear: "But so and so, who is a Catholic, told me . . ." Then we would have to set about eradicating another misconception about the faith.

It seems that my wife's case is not exceptional. Only the other evening I was assured by a non-Catholic that the Church taught that doctors must "kill the mother in order to save the child." I assured him that this was untrue and explained the Church's teaching on the subject. He refused to believe me, saying that

Bishop Stensen was active until the day of his death. He insisted that it was not his severe ascetical life that brought him to an early death and pointed out a number of examples of ascetical personages in the history of the Church who had been far more severe on themselves than he and had nevertheless lived much longer. A number of Lutherans were present at his deathbed. They wept at the passing of a man they greatly admired. Conscious to the end, the bishop asked his friends to pray that he might make a perfect act of contrition, since there was no priest present to administer the last sacraments.

The testimonies of all his acquaintances are a glowing tribute to the saintly life he led as bishop "in the regions of the unbelievers." At the request of the de' Medici family, the body of Bishop Stensen was brought to Florence and entombed in the crypt of San Lorenzo, beneath the famous Medici chapel.

It is hoped that personal knowledge and insight into Niels Stensen's holiness gained from a scholarly study of his letters will help to speed the canonization of this scientist-saint. One can think of no better patron for this anguished age of the nuclear weapon.

I, apparently, was not "up on the latest teaching," as it was a Catholic who had given him that information.

The next day I mailed the young man a pamphlet, *Moral Questions Affecting Married Life*, published by the National Catholic Welfare Conference. It contains two addresses given in 1951 by Pope Pius XII wherein this problem is explicitly treated and this misconception concerning Catholic teaching is quite forcefully quashed. My non-Catholic friend tells me that it "certainly clears things up, but why did so and so tell me that?"

I don't know why a Catholic should have given him such weird information, just as I don't know why some Catholics gave my wife such wild ideas about Catholicism. I do know that such ignorance on the part of Catholics is doing tremendous damage to the Church.

The other manifestation of ignorance, one which does but slightly less damage to the Church, is that of those who realize their ignorance and in all humility say: "I don't know. You'd better ask a priest." While not spreading error, such people do not spread the truth either, and such a statement is not a very good testimonial to the Church. It is not unimaginable that the non-Catholic has spent weeks getting up enough courage to ask this particular Catholic this question concerning the Church. The reply he gets is "Go and see a priest." How many non-Catholics would do so?

Within the last three weeks I have had two Jehovah's Witnesses call at my door. Poor, humble, thoroughly wrong, they at least know what their church teaches and makes every effort to spread its doctrines. In each case I invited the caller in, had him sit down and promptly began asking questions.

In the first case, the young man was a newly immigrated Mexican. I asked him why he had left the



Church and he, startled, replied: "They do not let you read the Bible." I brought out my Bible. "I read it," I said.

"They will punish you if they catch you," he said.

I read him an excerpt from Pius XII's encyclical on biblical studies, *Divino Aflante Spiritu* (1943), wherein the Pope encourages Catholics to read the Bible. This, too, has been published as an NCWC pamphlet. He had no reply to this and I began to ask him more questions concerning his apostasy. It was caused, of course, by complete ignorance of his faith. A simple soul, he believed everything that his first American friends, Jehovah's Witnesses, told him about the Catholic Church. I asked him more questions about his new religion, explaining Catholic teaching on the topics we covered, while particularly emphasizing the Catholic nature of the Bible.

He was thoroughly confused by the time he had to leave, and he promised to read the two pamphlets on Catholicism which I had given him.

I followed the same procedure with the second person who called upon me. This one also left with a

couple of Catholic pamphlets and the promise that they would be read.

What would happen to these door-bell ringers if every Catholic house in the land were to greet them with Catholic literature and a straight-forward presentation of the Catholic Church's credentials? It is not unimaginable that their door-to-door campaigning would produce more Catholics than it would Jehovah's Witnesses.

Our society would surely feel the effects if every Catholic made a habit of picking up at least one Catholic pamphlet each Sunday and, after studying it thoroughly, passing it on to a non-Catholic. Catholics could follow up discussions with non-Catholics by sending them Catholic literature on the topics they had been discussing.

Tremendous changes would be worked if a campaign against ignorance and misconceptions were waged within the body of Catholic laity, as well as among our non-Catholic friends and acquaintances. Why don't we try it and find out?

CLAYTON C. BARBEAU

## Get-rich-quick lure of "condensed books"

Harold C. Gardiner

Older readers—into whose ranks we are rapidly being winnowed by remorseless time—may remember a redoubtable character whose escapades used to grace the pages of an older *Saturday Evening Post*, if our reading-memory does not play us false. He was Get-Rich-Quick Wallingford, who came up every week or so with some scheme, plausible and even seductive on the surface but hare-brained beneath, for becoming a millionaire practically overnight and most painlessly. Mr. Wallingford has long succumbed to oblivion, perhaps because the attractions of becoming a mere millionaire do not loom so large in these days of high taxes. He still lingers in the older reader's mind and affections, however, as a type of American who wanted, and wants, big results fast—with a minimum of effort.

There is nothing wrong, of course, with a man making a million dollars fast, providing neither the sum nor the speed entails immoral means or ends. And if American technical methods can assure the erecting of a skyscraper over a week-end, well and good, provided it is a well and safely built building. But when we get into the realms of the mind and the spirit, into the fields of culture in general, problems arise. Is it possible to get culturally rich quick? Can one become really well educated in a hurry? Can wine truly be mellowed by electronic bombardments?

## LITERATURE AND ARTS

It has long been a suspicion in some quarters that one of the characteristic features of American civilization has been exactly this passion to get culturally rich quick. Much of this passion, of course, is most admirable. We, as a culture, had a late start, and in our determination to catch up, often felt that we could prove our cultural equality merely by attracting, mainly because we could afford to buy them, works of art, great artists and musicians. In the days when we were not producing many evidences of deep culture, we thought commendably that at least we could give culture a haven and a hearing.

But other aspects of this zeal for a cultural speed-up raise some questions. One of the reasons for the success of the *Reader's Digest*, for example, would seem to be the impression many people have that if they only read the fascinating articles over a relatively small period of time, they would have the equivalent of a university education. Readers would hear, in a year or so, of all the latest developments in science, philosophy, religion, the arts, public affairs, sports, amusements, crime and what not. The magazine, of course, never promised all this, but how many a

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reader has unconsciously, wistfully been all along anticipating just about that?

The newest promise that culture—or one aspect of it—can be got quick-like seems to the proliferation of the “condensed book” clubs. It is a phenomenon about a year and a half old; it seems to be with us to stay; it perhaps deserves at this time some thought and criticism. What does the phenomenon promise; what can it deliver?

Here is, to begin with, a run-down on some of the major “condensed book” clubs. The giant among them is the Reader’s Digest Condensed Book Club. It began in 1950 with a “modest” 200,000 members; by the middle of 1954, it had burgeoned to 1.6 million members. For the price of \$2 these members get every three months four books condensed into one volume (the four complete books would have cost \$14.45). This condensed book club extended its operations to England in the summer of 1954; one English reaction will be commented on later.

Doubleday’s Best in Books offers to its 200,000 members (as of August, 1954), up to eight books shortened into one volume six times a year at \$1.49. A subsidiary of the Book of the Month Club, Books Abridged, charges \$1.95 a month for four condensed books. Other competitors in the field include Condensed Religious Books, which culls Protestant thought, and a Condensed Classics Club, whose abbreviations, it is announced, will be “educator-approved.”

There are very probably other “condensed book” clubs which have not yet come within purview—how could there not be, when the pioneers have met with such staggering success? But this brief survey will at least show that an estimate would not be far wrong which concluded that today there are millions of Americans who, if they read anything save the daily paper and a popular magazine, must spend their book-reading time keeping up with the 600-odd pages into whose compass four to eight books have been condensed.

Is any judgment of this trend proper to make at this time? We have one reaction, one judgment, which I would like to pass on those who are concerned with the proper place of the book in American cultural life. It appeared in the London *Times Literary Supplement* for July 30, 1954, and viewed somewhat askance the news that the Reader’s Digest Condensed Book Club would soon invade the British Isles. An editorial in the eminent journal noted somewhat ungraciously that the process of condensing books was possible because

... skilled condensers, trained in a technique analogous to those used by the Oriental growers of miniature trees and the head-shrinkers of the Amazon, will employ their art in compressing five full works into the compass of one ordinary book. So, there is no reason to doubt, the number of books “read” will be much increased, and for author and publisher of the original there will flow, so to speak, a second pressing of the grape.

After going on to admit that some kinds of books are admirably suited to condensation for some kinds of readers—books that merely give information, for example: “matters of fact (a field in which shortest written is usually best read)” —the editorial poses the larger question of “why we read and write books at all?” If we read for pleasure and delight and some meed of wisdom (which is far wider and deeper than mere instruction), then who is to condense into us these fruits of reading? Most experienced readers, indeed, develop “some powers of condensation and need no separate condenser” and, moreover, the whole scheme raises the problem “whether a skilled condenser, faced with half a million words on which to apply his art, must, to play fair, read every one of them.”

How, for instance, would even a most professional “shrinker of heads” go about condensing Waugh’s *Officers and Gentlemen*, reviewed this week (p. 475)? This is my query, not that of the *Literary Supplement*. If a novel is a good novel, does its excellence rest only in plot? If so, it could probably be condensed into a sentence, just as *Macbeth* could be so shrunk. But if atmosphere, more or less leisurely character development, philosophical and descriptive asides, the beauty of language and the keenness of observation mean anything today, as they have meant much down through the history of literature—then how can all this be simmered, boiled, stewed or reduced by any other process to bare bones? Admitted that many a modern novel would be improved by being reduced by a third, to maintain, as the condensed books pushers seem to do, that any book can be improved or at least essentially transmitted is like claiming that the shrunken head still keeps the faculties of sight, taste and smell.

Those who literally do not have time to read and who still would like to be able to “keep up with the books” may find some value in condensed books, but certainly no one who has ever truly enjoyed the pleasures of reading will consider that he is getting more in the boiled-down books than the left-overs of what might well have been a sumptuous literary banquet.

In the face of this trend, which seems the latest spasm in the endemic American get-rich-quick fever, I would like to underline the suggestions Frank Sheed makes at the conclusion of his admirable little pamphlet, *Reading for Catholic Parents* (Sheed and Ward, 50¢). He advises:

1. A real book cannot be read at the same speed as a pass-time book, any more than a steak can be eaten at the same speed as ice cream. . . Take a book as slowly as you need to understand it.
2. It helps tremendously to have someone else reading the same book, so that you can discuss it together. . . You are not bound to agree with everything the author says. *Listen* to what he says, but use your own mind. It is not essential that you think what he thinks. But it is essential that you should know what you think.
3. Read with a pencil. Mark in the margin

passages that seem to you to say something that you had not realized before, or to express some already known truth particularly winningly.

4. When reading, you will every so often come across a phrase which sheds a great shaft of light upon your own experience. . . . You never know when the truth will strike home. When that happens, stop reading, shut the book, put it away. Let the phrase sink into you. Many a book is of less value than one of its phrases.

Obviously, one who makes his reading a steady diet of condensed books will never read in that way. Indeed, the phrase that may have shed a "shaft of light" will probably have been already carefully condensed out of existence, and the passages that might have been thoughtfully pencil-marked already blue-penciled into oblivion.

The parting counsel—which may have been gathered by now—is this. Be chary about plunging into a constant reading of condensed books alone. They may serve a purpose, but it is not the purpose that good books have served down through the ages. They can supply mere information, but the cultural riches they seem to promise are, generally speaking, riches that are panned, even in this age of speed-reading, ounce by ounce, and not gathered from bulging bonanzas that yield huge nuggets at every stroke of the pick. Wisdom, which books, after all, are supposed to make grow in us, is a slow growth. I am sure that even Mr. Wallingford, who never actually got rich quick, would agree.

#### **Moderation yields to passion**

#### **THE OPPRESSION OF PROTESTANTS IN SPAIN**

By Jacques Delpech. Foreword by John A. Mackay. Beacon. 114p. \$2

The introduction to this work, by Dr. John A. Mackay, president of the Princeton Theological Seminary, is a highly emotional attack upon the Catholic Church in Spain. The work itself is by a French Huguenot minister and is more moderate in tone. The volume professes to be a completely objective picture of the status of Protestants in Spain. The introduction makes it clear that one of the purposes in translating and publishing the work is political, viz., to enable Americans to judge whether Spain is qualified to be included in the "free world."

In his 13-page introduction, Dr. Mackay outlines his strong feelings about Spanish Catholicism. Through the centuries a few souls dedicated to freedom struggled against ecclesiastical tyranny and a barren Scholasticism. The Protestants, of course, were among their number. They had allies in St. Teresa of Avila, St. John

of the Cross and Fray Luis de León. The dawn came with the Republic of 1931. Its leaders were dedicated wholeheartedly to freedom—including freedom of religion. But a civil war, instigated by the hierarchy, once more snuffed out the light. Thus Dr. Mackay.

Turning to the serious portion of the volume, one finds that Pastor Delpech admits there is no persecution of Protestants in Spain in the sense of martyrdom, imprisonment and massacres. There is nothing, in other words, comparable to the plight of the Irish under Cromwell, or the Catholics in 16th-century England, despite the provocative title of the book and the emotional outburst of Dr. Mackay. But Protestants are sometimes unofficially subjected to harassment, and their religious activities are carried on under certain official disabilities.

Much of what the author says is true. His account, however, is marred by emphases and omissions which rob it of a completely objective character. The position of Cardinal Segura, for example, cannot be offered as representative of the official viewpoint of the Spanish authorities. He relates that the editor-priest of *Ecclesia* was discharged by his superior after de-

#### **The First Communion**

Working the orchard,  
Cloud-banks of apple blossom  
Phosphorous with sunlight this afternoon,  
I think of you and of your first communion.

Ladder leaning to  
The sky, I climb within  
Branches and stand to tall stature  
There in tree-center turning to see

Bough leaf and  
Blossom bursting about  
Me out of its genesis of light  
Into the air, and everywhere I look

Unfolding  
Like a nursery of stars.  
O may your days bloom, my sister,  
And you become all that is beautiful

And white,  
Budding this tattered  
Space with easters of innocence and grace,  
Unleashing to four directions light

Out of all time  
And seasons back to God.  
Hold fast forever to this tree your Bridegroom  
Whose heart of bloom shines through you from within.

JAMES F. COTTER

## **BOOKS**

nouncing the Government's censorship of the press. But the Spanish bishops launched the same criticism of censorship some time later—and this the author does not tell us. Many of his instances of harassment could be duplicated in almost any community in the world where a very small minority embraces a point of view alien to the mores of the dominant group.

Theologians and canonists must decide whether the legal status of the Protestants in Spain—they do not number over 20,000 at the most—can be justified in the light of conditions in the modern world. From the viewpoint of practical politics, however, one thing seems pretty certain: as the linkages of Spain with the West become more intimate, it will be impossible for her to maintain certain policies at variance with those of the rest of the Atlantic community. We can expect profound modifications in the Spanish picture.

Had this work been published



without a semi-inflammatory introduction filled with distortions, half-truths and positive untruths, it might have served as a basis for discussing an admittedly thorny problem. As it stands, unfortunately, moderation has been swamped by unregulated passion.

FRANCIS E. MCMAHON

### Wit—but compassion more

#### OFFICERS AND GENTLEMEN

By Evelyn Waugh. Little, Brown. 339p. \$3.75

Don't be misled by other reviews of this second part of Waugh's novelistic treatment of the war, which was so successfully begun in *Men at Arms*. Not that all earlier reviews have hit wide of the mark nor does this one alone score a bull's-eye, but many an opinion already advanced may have given the impression that here Waugh is simply at his impish best—witty, sarcastic, somewhat ennuied with all the claptrap of the modern world, and engaged solely in drawing a sardonic burlesque of war.

All these characteristics of one who is probably the finest satirist now writing in English are to be discovered in this volume, but there is much, much more. There is no denying—and who would want to?—that war is, in Waugh's book, stupid, foolish, stultifying, wasteful. That is the first impression one gets as the tale unfolds. But growing with and outstripping that impression is the sense of compassion, of fellowship with and reverence for the fighting man that burns beneath the spoofing and the ribbing accorded to almost all the characters, and especially to the brass. One gets the feeling that Waugh, a commando himself in the early stages of the war, is trying to mask under an easily-pierced hard shell something close to tears of kinship and love for the brave, blundering, inept and glorious sort of the early commando troops.

The story is a continuation of the adventures of Guy Crouchback, the Catholic gentlemen moving into middle age who, in *Men at Arms*, had seen in the war a modern crusade that called like a clarion to his spirit of chivalry. The call still echoes at the start and through most of this volume, but the tones of Roncesvalles grow dimmer and dimmer down the corridors of bureaucracy and through the mazes of red tape and, at the end, Guy is sadly resigned to the fact that honor finds place with difficulty in the depersonalized ranks of mechanized Mars.

The most superb section of this deceptively deep book is the long

Book Two: "In the Picture." This deals with the abortive campaign on Crete, and is one of the most moving accounts of a campaign—if it can be called that—I have ever read. One catches the very breath of the confusion, the orders and counter-orders (or no orders at all), the misery, bravery and cowardice pulsing beneath all the wisecracks, the British understatement, the "what-ho, stiff-upper-lip" chaffing and the general muddling through.

The book is not Catholic in theme, as was *Brideshead Revisited*, but it is satire with a soul that was not evident in Waugh's earlier works of that type. Guy Crouchback has an ideal for which he is fighting, and it is evidently Waugh's own ideal. It is perhaps best symbolized in the passage where Guy straggles into an abandoned Cretan village and finds a young English soldier who, dead, undamaged, it seemed, lay as though at rest.

Guy knelt and took the disk from the cold breast. He read a number, a name, a designation, R.C. "May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed, in the mercy of God, rest in peace."

Guy stood. The bluebottles [that, clustered round his lips and eyes, proclaimed that he was flesh] returned to the peaceful young face. Guy saluted and passed on.

*Officers and Gentlemen* gives an insight into war that many a more ponderously earnest book completely misses. Perhaps, at bottom, it is because Waugh can write.

HAROLD C. GARDINER

### No "shunpikery" here

#### GRANDFATHER STORIES

By Samuel Hopkins Adams. Random House. 312p. \$3.50

"I could perform many evolutions not inelegantly," Grandfather Adams admitted to his grandchildren on one of many memorable occasions of reminiscence. He was referring to his wizardry on ice skates, to be sure, but his claim may be taken to characterize everything this incomparable "Corinthian" and "ruffleshirt" ever did. What mortal child other than Myron Adams' grandchildren ever had a grandfather who saved the Erie Canal, who was jailed for slave-running, who bought an apprentice at a Public Vendu, and (with his grandchildren silent partners in the conspiracy) who destroyed a Carlylean Circle?

Grandfather Adams was in his eighties when he began to spin the

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yarns so deftly recalled and respun by Samuel Hopkins Adams. Grandfather was born at the end of the 18th century, and he affected an 18th-century air. "Certes," he would often remark in approval or confirmation of a grandchild's comment. To his wife he was always formally "Mr. Adams," and on one glorious occasion when a supercilious New England visitor to Rochester asked if he claimed kinship with the Boston Adamses, he conceded that John Quincy Adams "may well have been a connection of our line, though, being no brag-hard, he would naturally not press the claim."

Yes, Grandfather Adams was a formidable figure, patriarchal, righteous and an ardent teetotaler. But for his grandchildren he could unbend, particularly after seeking aid from Hop Bitters, the Invalid's Friend and Hope, a local Rochester concoction which was forty per cent alcohol.

Sometimes the grandchildren's visits to the Union Street cottage would turn out to involve nothing more than a reading from Carlyle, but Grandfather could easily be tempted to open his scrapbook or tap his ample vein of memory. Grandfather could be steered, but he was unpredictable. He might switch from piety to pie-eating, or suddenly remember his days with a circus, or the time he made a small fortune hunting mandrake roots, or the smaller one obtained from mining rubies (York State rubies, of course). Sometimes (not often) Grandfather was merely a spectator, as in the affair of the "stomach ache that extended canal-side from Albany to Buffalo," or at the deplorable fraud practised by "Four-Skate Pilkington," and at the lamentable end of high-diving Sam Patch and his equally venturesome bear.

Even more remarkable, if possible,

than Grandfather Adams' adventures is his vocabulary. Grandfather never swore, and he was seldom angry. Yet the rapid fire of such epithets as "jamber-jawed politicaster" and "liquorous kankikoy" served him as well as profanity served lesser men. And who else ever described actors as "shun-pikers" and "swing-kettles," or photography as "bobcrackery"? Certes, this is a remarkable and thoroughly enjoyable book. RILEY HUGHES

#### FUNDAMENTALS OF GOVERNMENT

By Henry J. Schmandt and Paul G. Steinbicker. Bruce. 507p. \$4.50

This volume is designed as a college text for a one-semester introductory course in the principles and elements of government. It is frankly based on the concept of man as a moral being with a supernatural as well as a natural end and the conviction that "the eternally valid requirements of the natural moral law and of its implications in the sphere of politics will alone make possible true and lasting political progress." As such, it fills a long-standing gap in the literature of political science.

Part II, "The Bases of Politics," clarifies the relation of ethics to politics. Philosophy, of which ethics is a branch, determines the *end* (common good), and science the *means* to the end. Since political science is concerned with both means and ends, it must include the data of empirical research as well as the guides set by moral principles.

Part V, "The Basic Forms of Government," marks the transition to the science of politics. Complete and careful analysis and evaluation are accorded the traditional topics: constitutional government, democracy,

political parties, federal and unitary forms, separation of powers, cabinet and presidential government, legislative, executive and judicial branches and the family of nations.

Each of the book's 18 chapters contains a well-arranged topical breakdown, a conclusion which succinctly draws together the subject matter of the chapter, a set of provocative questions and problems, and a selected list of additional readings. A final appendix provides further bibliographical references. A ten-page index evidences the range of subjects treated in the text.

Comprehensiveness, precision of terminology, penetrating analyses and arguments make it of great value to the teacher. These same characteristics may, however, present a problem to the average student in the introductory course who is probably just starting the study of philosophy and related subjects. A future edition might profit by: (1) a simplification of language; (2) an initial definition of terms, for example, common good (137-139), followed by an analysis and explanation; (3) the insertion of a summary or outline at the beginning of each chapter in place of the conclusion. PATRICIA BARRETT

#### THE GREAT AMERICAN HERITAGE: The story of the five Eisenhower brothers

By Bela Kornitzer. Farrar, Straus & Cudahy. 331p. \$5

This is a difficult review to put on paper. Mr. Kornitzer has a generous, warm-hearted enthusiasm for our great American heritage that provided plenty of strength to six Eisenhower boys to realize their ambitions.

One shrinks from hurting Mr. Kornitzer, a Hungarian refugee from communism. Yet this tape-recorded collection of interviews with the five surviving Eisenhower brothers, when edited and interpreted by Mr. Kornitzer, simply bubbles over with the author's youthful, wide-eyed and undisciplined admiration for our great democratic heritage, our exemplary family life, our emphasis upon freedom of opportunity, our deep-rooted faith and our wholesome condemnation of overzealous materialism. Mr. Kornitzer is convinced that we are a great and good people.

This is the folksy story of David and Ida Eisenhower. Mr. Kornitzer tells us that life in Abilene was hard and austere for these intensely religious early settlers on the edge of the Kansas plains. They had to work long hours to earn their living, "and they

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had neither time nor money in their early years for recreation or amusement." This may not be great literature but it proves conclusively that Mr. Kornitzer has a heart of gold.

The Eisenhowers had six rugged individualist sons. Their names were Arthur, Edgar, Dwight, Roy, Earl and Milton. Arthur rose to become a banker. Edgar rose to become a corporation lawyer. Dwight rose to become President of the United States. Roy rose to become a pharmacist and died in 1942. Earl rose to become general manager of a biweekly suburban newspaper. Milton rose to become a university president.

The moral of Mr. Kornitzer's unrestrained eulogy of the Eisenhower family is that, in democratic America, it is possible for poor but deeply religious boys, by thrift, determination, perseverance and hard work, to rise to the top.

Mr. Kornitzer says that this is no Horatio Alger story.

JOHN J. O'CONNOR

#### WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON AND THE HUMANITARIAN REFORMERS

By Russel B. Nye. Little, Brown. 215p. \$3

Garrison makes us deeply grateful for Lincoln. If this nation had followed what this professional reformer with a unique Messiah complex preached in the pages of the *Liberator* and from the platform while he dominated the abolitionist movement, the United States would not have survived that generation.

Lacking any roots in the sound political traditions of the young nation, Garrison advocated a policy of disunion that would have permitted the Southern confederacy to perpetuate slavery. He verbally abused all who differed with him. His former friends and associates, who were compelled to part company with him, were the victims of much of this abuse; they knew him best. Yet somehow he was considered by many as the real author of the emancipation of slaves.

This volume, another in the Library of American Biography series, relates the pre-Civil War reform movement through the life and activities of Garrison, best known as an abolitionist. But the choice is sound, for Garrison supported all the reform movements, to the despair of the more single-minded abolitionists. He even became a stout advocate of temperance without tempering his taste for many health nostrums highly alcoholic in content.

But Garrison and the abolition crusade dominate the book. The other reforms are mentioned only in passing as Garrison pauses in his warfare against slavery to break a lance in support of them, be they sane or inane: women's rights, anti-Sabbatarianism, utopian communism, anticlericalism, pacifism, no-government agitation.

Both the ceaseless activities of the man and the troubled growth of the abolition movement are ably depicted, and the reader receives a fair understanding of Garrison from the epilog, where his character is probed and his contribution appraised. But it seems to me that the clue to Garrison's mind and labors has not been identified. Garrison's distorted understanding of God, man, man's social nature, civil society and government disqualified him from being a humanitarian. WILLIAM L. LUCEY

#### SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY: Its Nature and Growth

By Nicholas S. Timasheff. Doubleday. 299p. \$4.50

A happy combination of erudition, sophistication, clear thinking and good writing makes this the best of the textbooks on social theory. Dr. Timasheff deals very adroitly with a difficult subject. Sociological theories, as is made clear in this book, are not theories in the technical sense current in physics, for example. They represent ideas, speculations and principles of general import propounded by various writers who are commonly classified as sociologists. These in turn are distinguished by their interest in the nature and functioning of society. There is little continuity between sociological theories; hence, no systematic treatment of them is possible.

Dr. Timasheff, fully aware of the problem, approaches it by ingeniously combining a genetic, historical viewpoint with a presentation of contributions of outstanding social theorists. His discussion is so organized that comparison and evaluation of the contributions is made possible.

The subject-matter is well balanced. The book is approximately equally divided between men of the 19th and 20th centuries. Comte, Spencer, Durkheim, Pareto and Max Weber are treated in separate chapters. Other writers are discussed under various headings which indicate the principal orientation of their ideas, e.g., the social Darwinists, the neo-positivists, the functional school, and so on. The discussion in each chapter is brief, but uniformly well executed. Summaries

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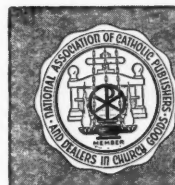


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N.A.C.P.D.C.G. .... 477  
C. F. Petelle ..... 475  
Will & Baumer Candle Co. .... 47  
Notices ..... 480

#### SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES

Caldwell College ..... iii  
Good Counsel ..... iii  
LaSalle Military Academy ..... iii  
Marymount ..... iii  
Mt. St. Mary ..... iii  
Notre Dame of Maryland ..... iii  
Ravenhill Academy ..... iii  
Sacred Theology ..... iii  
Siena Heights ..... iii  
Trinity College ..... iii  
Academy of Mt. St. Vincent ..... iii  
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of viewpoints are accurate and the critical comment avoids involvement in argument and keeps to the point.

Dr. Timasheff himself remains pretty much in the background. He apparently wishes to be the teacher rather than a social theorist in his own right. One senses however, that he is interested in a combination of functional, normative and dynamic considerations for the understanding of social reality. He does not take sides with any particular school, but appears to be most sympathetic to the viewpoints of Max Weber and Pitirim Sorokin.

According to Dr. Timasheff, the present period in the field of sociology is still "a period characterized by competition between points of view considered most adequate to explain social reality in its totality." In his estimation there is no sociological theory extant as yet. There is, however, an area of agreement on theoretical issues, mainly pertaining to the subject-matter of sociology, its characteristic approach and its methodology. Most of this area, however, "presents only majority opinion not shared by minorities, sometimes influential minorities."

The great contributions to sociological theory seem, then, to lie ahead of us. However, Dr. Timasheff's book provides a most useful survey of what has been accomplished so far.

THEODORE ABEL

#### SORCERERS' VILLAGE

By Hassoldt Davis. Duell, Sloan & Pearce. 334p. \$5

If you have a yen to go exploring in the jungles of the Ivory Coast, this is for you. The search is for a secret community of sorcerers. Your guide will be Hassoldt Davis, veteran explorer, and your photographer will be his lovely wife, Ruth. There will be trustworthy native boys like N'Dri along to keep things moving smoothly, as well as some not so trustworthy.

When the jungle gets too much for you there will be pleasant interludes of being entertained by the colonial governors here and there along the route, with palatable food and comfortable living quarters. Mr. Davis and his wife seem to enjoy exotic morsels like dry, salted termites, which, it seems, are eaten like peanuts or potato chips.

Fortunately you will be on time to attend the coronation of an African king. When you find your path strewn with the internal organs, especially the hearts, of human beings, then look closely for an iron claw lying nearby: the emblem of the Baboon

Society, which has just performed its sacred rite.

And even in the jungles of the Ivory Coast the inroads of communism will be visible, for Gogro, the party leader, is there and in his little red car has gone on ahead of you to turn the natives against you, the capitalist. Eventually you will find the strange village of Yho where apprentice sorcerers learn to be sorcerers. Mission accomplished. And you still have your head, though your stomach may have left you by now.

Mr. Davis has the saving grace of humor to keep himself and his wife out of cannibalistic pots, and the reader out of the screaming-meemies. The book is full of exciting incidents, strange, barbaric rituals and customs, all told graphically and in good taste, and supplemented by a selection of the photographs taken by Mrs. Davis.

FORTUNATA CALIRI

FRANCIS E. McMAHON made a survey of the Hispanic World for the N. Y. Post in 1946-1948.

RILEY HUGHES, on the English faculty of the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, is the author of the recently published *The Hills Were Liars* (Bruce).

MOTHER PATRICIA BARRETT, of Manhattanville College, Purchase, N. Y., took her doctorate in government at St. Louis University.

REV. WILLIAM L. LUCEY, S.J., librarian of the Dinand Library at Holy Cross College, Worcester, Mass., has written extensively on American history.

THEODORE ABEL is head of the Department of Sociology at Hunter College, N. Y.

## THE WORD

*And they brought to Him a man who was deaf and dumb, with the prayer that He would lay His hand upon Him (Mark 7:32; Gospel for 11th Sunday after Pentecost).*

The miracles which Christ our Lord performed for the sake of needy men bear a certain similarity to the sacraments which He instituted for

the identical reason. There is to every sacrament what we might call an outside and an inside, for a sacrament, by definition, is a visible sign of an invisible grace. So our Saviour's miracles, if they are understood merely as spectacular humanitarianism, must be completely misunderstood.

A miracle has an inside and an outside, too. If the Redeemer of all men gave speech and hearing to one man who happened to be deaf and dumb, the Saviour of all surely meant thus to convey some message or benefit to all, regardless of the immediate state and functioning of their senses. When St. John, in his Gospel, terms miracles *signs*, he knows whereof he speaks. A miracle *means* something.

Let us read a strictly symbolic meaning into the miracle recorded in the liturgical Gospel for this 11th Sunday after Pentecost. Is it possible that for some generations now the layman in the Catholic Church has not been deaf, but impressively dumb? Is it possible that in this same era the earnest, hard-working Catholic cleric has been not at all dumb but—like so many who are partially deaf—quite unconsciously hard of hearing?

The sincere Catholic layman has certainly not been deaf, in this latter period of Christian history, to all the appeals that have been made to him in the name of his faith. The layman was asked for money, and his dollars built the amazing physical structure of the Church in America. He was urged to frequent the sacraments, and he became, in not a few cases, a weekly and even a daily communicant. It was suggested to the Catholic that he make a closed retreat, and retreat-houses both for men and for women now welcome capacity crowds on most of the week-ends of the year. A more austere devotion called Nocturnal Adoration was mentioned in the hearing of the laity, and we priests were astonished at the number of Catholic men who quietly appeared in relays during the entire night in order to spend an hour in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament.

No, the Catholic layman has not been spiritually deaf during the last half-century and more. On the other hand, this same dependable layman has been, until quite recently, an extraordinarily inarticulate member of the living Body of Christ on earth.

It is perfectly true, of course, that headstrong and headlong people seem unable to distinguish steadily between a procedure like expressing an opinion or advancing a suggestion and the very different operation of shouting orders and hurling abuse.

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There will always be a kind of man and therefore a kind of Catholic layman who, when he is encouraged to speak his mind, such as it is, on matters religious or parochial, will at once issue a pastoral directive binding all and sundry under pain of something dire.

Still, shouldn't it be possible in the Church, as elsewhere, to isolate, becalm and immobilize this forceful type, and yet lend a genuinely attentive ear to the devoted Catholic layman whose interior love of Holy Mother Church, and not a burning itch to pontificate, leads him to broach an idea or outline a plan which might actually help everyone to love and serve God better?

These are steep and thorny places through which we struggle to find our way with feeble words. The footing here is treacherous, indeed. Yet let us go forward in God's name; let us not turn back, oh, not back!

VINCENT P. MCCORRY, S.J.

## FILMS

THE DIVIDED HEART is a superb movie. It is based on an actual incident, of itself ineluctably poignant, from among the literally millions of tragic family dislocations which the calculated inhumanity of the Third Reich inflicted on occupied Europe. Nevertheless the clear and compassionate light with which the film illuminates its material proceeds not alone from the tragic actualities of recent history but also from the hearts and minds of really skilled movie-makers.

The situation is this: toward the close of World War II a German couple (Cornell Borchers, Armin Dahlen) adopt a small boy, supposedly a German war orphan, from a Leipzig orphanage. Seven years later, through detective work of the International Refugee Organization, the child is identified as the son of a Yugoslav woman (Yvonne Mitchell) from whom he was snatched as an infant as she was being hustled off to a concentration camp. The real mother, whom the war has bereft also of husband and two daughters and every reason for living, sues through the proper channels to recover her child. To the United States Court of the High Commissioner for Germany falls the painful task of deciding a case where justice cannot be done because both parties are entirely innocent and any deci-

sion must, in effect, be a punishment for one.

The film is British in origin and has earned for the actresses playing both mothers the English equivalent of Academy Awards. Deservedly so. Their projection both of the particularized reactions and states of mind evoked by the unhappy impasse and of the universal emotions of motherhood is nothing short of brilliant in its force, accuracy and perception. At the risk of slighting Miss Borchers, I would call Yvonne Mitchell's achievement the more remarkable. Speaking nothing but Slovenian (which is not translated unless the context of the story provides for an interpreter) she conveys, largely by pantomime, an extraordinarily moving transformation.

At the beginning she is a harsh and joyless woman whose demand for the return of her "baby" is tied up with bitter memories and a hatred of all Germans. Before the end she has softened tremulously and touchingly into an acceptance of present reality.

Though the two ladies necessarily occupy the center of the stage, the direction (by Charles Crichton), script (by Jack Whittingham) and such other details as supporting performances, photography and score are equally felicitous. Altogether the picture is both tremendously moving for the family and a notable example of the difficult-to-achieve species of film which contributes to international understanding. (Republic)

COURT MARTIAL is an absorbing and tidily constructed English military court-room drama. The leading figure is an able, likable, war-decorated Army officer (David Niven), who is on trial before a panel of obviously reluctant but duty-conscious fellow officers on a set of comparatively trivial charges which could none the less end his career. As the court-martial proceeds it becomes apparent that the hero is the victim of a petty and vindictive commanding officer (Allan Cuthbertson) and even more so of a neurotic, poisonously irresolute wife (Margaret Leighton).

The story, astutely directed by Anthony Asquith and extremely well acted, unfolds logically and suspensefully within the framework of the trial, laced, in addition, with the touches of urbane comedy and apt characterization which are the hallmarks of superior British films. It is flawed by the rather casual introduction of infidelity.

(Kingsley International)  
MOIRA WALSH

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## CORRESPONDENCE

### Spreading the word

**EDITOR:** As we anticipated, reference to our pictorial report, *Article One*, in the July 30 issue of *AMERICA* has resulted in a steady flow of requests for this publication from your readers throughout the United States and Canada.

Each year our publications receive considerable attention in the daily and periodical press, yet in no instance has the response approached that we experience when *AMERICA* refers to our work. We are also very encouraged when we learn from your readers that they intend to use our materials in school and community education programs.

Thanks again for your splendid cooperation with our commission in its educational efforts.

JOHN B. SULLIVAN  
Director of Education  
N. Y. State Commission  
against Discrimination

New York, N. Y.

### Drama and doctrine

**EDITOR:** I'm not sure that many of us would, like Mother C. E. Maguire, welcome more discussion of "Catholic" art ("Grace and the play," *Am.* 7/30). It seems to me, at least, that we've had enough of it for a while, and I doubt that anything "thoughtful and profound" on this all-too-perennial question is forthcoming. . . .

Moreover, I think Mother Maguire has muddled the problem somewhat. It was a disagreeable surprise to find this statement: "... perhaps we shall have to abandon the drama in its modern form if we wish to make direct doctrinal statements." I hope "we" abandon all forms of drama, poetry and fiction if we wish to make such "statements." I thought "we" (Catholic critics) agreed long ago that preaching had no place in our writing.

Certainly in Greene's best novels, as in the works of the other great Catholic writers, our beliefs and "special" problems have been presented (not, even in the lyric, merely stated) effectively, with the result that these works have been accepted and admired by the non-Catholic audience.

The tired and unoriginal idea of "universality" now comes to mind. I dare not go further.

EDWARD F. JOST  
St. Louis, Mo.

### Backward students

**EDITOR:** The Feature "X" by Rev. Joseph M. Miller on the teaching of very backward pupils (*Am.* 7/23) struck a responsive chord. I have been teaching in our public high schools for the past 18 years and find that we are up against the same problem.

My personal solution would be to give "completion certificates" to those who have put in the time for four years, and regular diplomas to those who have attained the required degree of success in mastering the subject matter. A diploma would entitle the recipient to admission to a college. The certificate would represent a terminal point in formal education.

Maybe this isn't practical. I do not know where it has ever been done. But I do feel sorry for those before me year after year who I know will never really reach the level of the others. Even in the public high schools, teachers pass them on. We get them in regular senior classes and have to decide whether we are to be the "meanies" and fail them, or pass them on out of school and thereby lower the standing of the school in the community.

What to do? It has been a relentless question and nowhere have I yet heard a solution. That is why it did me good to read about someone else in the same dilemma.

ANNA D. JOHNSON

Chicago, Ill.

### Bouquet

**EDITOR:** This letter is probably one of many you have received complimenting you on your stimulating publications, *AMERICA* and the *Catholic Mind*. I have not yet been able to find more thought-provoking or satisfying Catholic periodicals.

As an 18-year-old convert and student at Fordham University, both of your publications fill my unusual needs for non-time-consuming yet intellectual reviews of what goes on in both the secular and Catholic worlds.

The personal benefit I have derived from your publications is most certainly immeasurable. When I was first converted, I found it extremely difficult to develop what one might call a Catholic mind or attitude. Your publications have most surely helped me over the humps and bumps of the long road toward that attitude.

BARBARA ANN LINDHOLM  
Syracuse, N. Y.



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